

[Amend claim 5 as follows:]

C2
cond
5 (twice amended). The method of claim 1, wherein said silicon-containing structure is a bottom electrode of a storage capacitor of a memory device and [said nitrided portion of said silicon-containing structure is] a capacitor dielectric is formed from the thermal nitridation and thermal oxidation of said silicon-containing structure.

Cancel claim 6.

Amend claim 7 as follows:

7 (twice amended). A method of forming an electrical device which has a dielectric formed between a bottom structure and a top structure, said method comprising the steps of:

[providing said bottom structure;]

C3
providing a [nitrogen-containing] gas comprising a mixture of nitrogen and oxygen over [said] a bottom structure;

heating said bottom structure at an ambient temperature [which is] at least 900C;

creating a plasma over said bottom structure to cause thermal nitridation and thermal oxidation of said bottom structure so as to form [said] a dielectric over said bottom structure; and

[providing said] forming a top structure over said dielectric.

Cancel claims 11 and 12.

Amend claim 13 as follows:

13 (amended). A method of forming a gate dielectric layer on a semiconductor substrate, said method comprising the steps of:

C4
providing a [nitrogen-containing] gas comprised of a mixture of nitrogen and oxygen;

heating said [silicon-containing structure] semiconductor substrate to an elevated temperature [which is] greater than 900C;

C4
cond
subjecting said semiconductor substrate to a plasma, wherein the combination of said [nitrogen-containing] gas, said elevated temperature, and said plasma result in thermal nitridation and thermal oxidation of a portion of said semiconductor substrate; and

forming a gate electrode over said nitrided and oxidized portion of said semiconductor substrate.

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-referenced application, based on the foregoing amendment and the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 through 5, 7 through 10, and 13 remain in this case. Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, and 13 are amended. Claims 6, 11, and 12 are cancelled.

The title is amended to more closely conform to the claimed invention.

The specification is amended to correct minor errors of a typographical nature, and to render it consistent with the drawings. No new matter is presented by this amendment.

Claim 13 was rejected under Section 112, second paragraph, as indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. In particular, the claim was rejected for lack of antecedent basis for the "said silicon-containing structure" element.

Claim 13 is amended above to overcome the rejection, by cancelling the objectionable phrase; and by now referring to the element as the semiconductor substrate; for which antecedent basis is present. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that amended claim 13 is now sufficiently definite to meet the requirements of Section 112, second paragraph.